

REMARKS

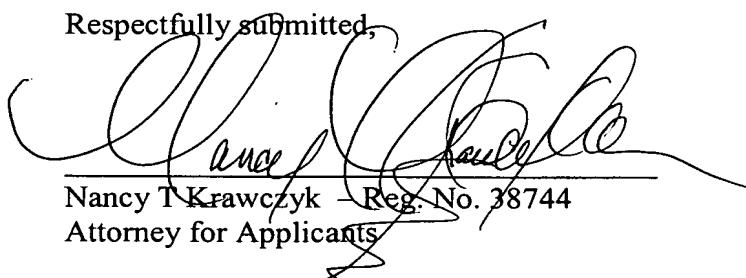
The amendments to the claims are supported by the original specification; reference is made to original paragraphs 41-42.

The pending claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the state of the art exemplified by Boileau (3,830,273), Gerard et al. (5,421,390), Gerard et al (5,645,658), Hammond et al (5,685,927), and European Patent Application 0 465 786 A1, in view of Palmer (1,293,528), Murray (2,691,335), French Patent 607.026, and Japanese Patent Application 5-229303 A taken with Japanese Patent Application 5-229302A.

In the Office Action of September 7, 2006, it is held that the term "separately manufactured" is a process limitation which does not require any structure distinct from that proposed by the rejection. While Applicant's disagree, the claim language has been clarified to indicate that the invention is an assembly of a separately manufactured cured tire and a separately manufactured ring that is placed in a groove of the cured tire. The two elements are not irreversibly secured to one another as with any of the structures proposed by the rejection.

The recited invention is not anticipated or obvious over any of the cited prior art.

In light of this amendment, all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application are allowable. Thus, the Examiner is respectfully requested to allow all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy T. Krawczyk Reg. No. 38744
Attorney for Applicants

The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company
Department 823
1144 East Market Street
Akron, Ohio 44316-0001
Telephone: (330) 796-6366
Facsimile: (330) 796-9018